

Journal:

Pan-dem-ic

May 31st, 2020

It's been 80 some odd days since Coronavirus changed all of our lives. And now, here comes this white cop, kneeling on a black man's neck, killing him. Riots ensue throughout the nation. It is the Rodney King beatings of the present day. It is the lynchings that has gone on since time immemorial. The bereaved are the friends and greater human family of Mr. George Floyd. A tragic mistake, for a public official to not have the common decency.

It seems many decent things are going away, as we learn of yoga studios reopening, only to have us teach wearing masks! The masks are the great destroyer. I've met plenty of people that don't like them. I remember taking the kids to Meijer and seeing the reactions when they saw I DIDN'T make my kids wear masks. Like droplets are contagious. Like any germs are. Like we lost the ability to see ourselves as electromagnetic beings. Maybe this is the place from which to start this summer.

And yet, something in my core calls this the "summer of love" for, well, for the potential it holds. Tours are cancelled, people are protesting with guns at the capitol, and the mass deluge of misinformation seems to be holding strong as we sift through the truth.

We'll still swim, we'll camp, we'll try and make light of this. I've gained a few extra pounds in emotional weight, as I cry for George's family, the kids stuck home with their abusive parents, and the suicide-prone youth, forever now cast under a net of uncertainty about their futures, college, jobs, institutions their parents have trusted their whole lives. This is the hardest thing: continuing to trust in these people and systems that have failed us ritualistically, year after year, decade after decade.

I used to write a lot in college, kept a journal, then met a lover, had kids and found myself in the same squeeze that most do: the grind. Wake up, coffee, work, lunch, come home, make dinner, sleep, get up and check the computer phone, fall back asleep, wake up, repeat pattern. We returned from Balinesia as soon as this whole mortar detonated in our laps. School called off for the year. Jobs lost. Now what.

Nervous parents. Overbearing germ theorists. Communities spying from behind curtains. Kids, no doubt wondering what in the sam hell is going on. No doubt a war on personal freedoms. No question. The iron fist of the law coming in hot. These are all clear. Happy dogs. Aloof cats. Restless kids.

What's not clear, though, is how bad it is, or when it will end. Usually we have these projections. Now all we have is "flattening the curve", but we don't know how big or how fast we're headed down the slope. I predict another spike around my birthday, which conveniently falls around election day. I haven't voted since 2004, when Kerry lost to Bush. Well, it was a tie? Kind of. I don't fucking know. I don't vote for systems that don't serve the greater good of humankind. And our corporate oligarchy (disguised as democracy) definitely doesn't. So much has gone on recently. So much can happen in 3 months!

But Bali is still whispering from my heart. I can hear the ocean, I can still see the girls playing with young kids from around the world. Kiwis, Germans, Aussies, Canadians. Bali is an island. They'll be fine. At the outset, they were simply PRAYING for China, not fearful of- they had a plan rooted in the skies. They call it FLU, but we now know that even this was/is a hoax. Flu SHOT. The new paradigm is SHOOTING.

Flu shots caused Autism in the 80s. These Corona shots will trigger a mass, worldwide epidemic, greater than this, the biggest coverup of all time! All parties involved in a great story. Could be the second coming, indeed. the Bible is a collection of stories. Stories that we mostly believe. Best-selling book. #1 for 877 weeks.

6.17.22: Wow, time flies. it's joon again. I've had a slew of interviews and job searches pending. I'm on the laptop this morning to write, write- keep planting the seeds that one day I can write for a living, in the woods, quiet and still. This should be the goal at this point.

I'm sending Ash all of the old love letters from last summer. I'm making plans to exit this tiny apartment and buy myself a home. I'm ready to do the work, even if it is the most mundane work -selling insurance- as I've seen the fun stuff and now it's time to get real.

I remember, briefly, a few years back, having a thought of being more comfortable as a cog in the machine. Although this thought returns, I'm sure I can do both. Cog and operator. Stickshift and hand. The goal is to feel alive and feel dead simultaneously. We're already dead!

Today I'll see Oliver, and we'll volunteer w/ dogs, and we'll shop for groceries and clean his place. I'll come back here- to my place- and tidy up and wait for the girls. We'll try to do as many things as we can in two days- and then I'll drive them back to their mom's.

The weekend has turned into a race, to please them, to keep them busy- but ultimately I'd like a weekend or two to myself, to sit- and write. About trees, about the swimming and concerts of yesterday.

8.11.22: Had to recount my past week, as it's been a big one- lots of synchronicities, and nature, and new women walking into my life. Too dizzy to choose. Too focused to choose. A week ago was Phish at Pine Knob. A spiritual experience as the storm rolled in, i grabbed a cold beer and an umbrella and chose to wait it out in the little wooded foyer just south of the main entrance. A couple of guys waited by a tree nearby. I bent the umbrella around me and crouched low as the wind howled and came at me sideways. These trees were happy trees. They danced in the rain, they showed me how. All the uniformity in oh, the dreadful wind and rain.

The rain lifted- they started to let folks in without checking tickets. And what a show! Towards the end of set one (only one set tonight), i danced along the great divide, between lawn and pav. The prettiest gal I ever did see locked eyes and walked right towards me. This happens at shows sometimes, on drugs. I come to find out later she was on a bunch of mushrooms and alcohol :/ but alas, no worries as this takes courage.

The kicker- she came up to me, pulled me in for a long, good hug- and then just stayed there! Surely opportunity doesn't knock twice. She gave me her name: Kate McDonald. Spiritual gangsta. She laughed and danced and didn't let go. We turned to get more to drink, she wanted a cigarette. I bummed one for her. Something shifted, though- she kinda tweaked and told me to "go live my life, then" and tbh, i'm not sure what triggered that. The drugs don't work? But the contrast of it all left me blunted, and i turned to leave the show for the night. I missed the last couple songs. Quietly excused myself.

Lay in bed all night, pondering the energy. Opportunity knocks once. I looked her up. She does massage, great. I scheduled one. Went in for it less than a week later. She was so funny, and good, and thanked me. So silly. Good to see her sober. Handed me her number at the end! Score. That's always a good verification that they like you. The digits.

11.4.22: A silly-ass week at earth school. The hits keep coming. New job. A couple new gals. A young, black mother of 3. Interest piqued. Doesn't drink. But alas. Over the undying search for the one who cannot raise her bar to mine. I get it. But do you? Car broken, birthday week. 43. Love you. Love mee. I'm not trying to be anything for once, and it kinda feels good in my body. And that's how I know it's true. I write to hang the energy. Out to dry. I sat in the chapel. Counted my

blessings. Can I fix the car in time to appear meaningful? Can I keep playing the proto-pathetique family games? What is success? Who is the authority? Cordyceps & chaga tonight. Lomatium. Amanita spagyric. Back to nature for answers. A warm week in November. 60 degrees and up. Change-a-coming. Likely.

I can faintly recall last summer, trying to be this thing, this energy, and even if entities came, and I was duped, I worked. And it's not true- that the harder you work, the luckier you get- some just get lucky. No plot. The haves and the have-nots. I'm the oldest child of a powerful legacy. To me, that's enough. Fuck the credit system. I'm its elder. 1983. Tonight I invent the DISCREDIT system- which increases your score as your goodness, peace & humble quiet integrity rolls on in. I remember cutting grass, after my sisters laid me off- what mistakes did i even make, bro?- after Jen's wedding, a week in Cozumel, good island weed, paying off cops with translation apps and covid tests and sex in the kitchen when I got home, to a woman who really wanted me- after sleepless nights, packing my own lunch and stumbling out the door, drunk on morning sex- until I learned what a cluster B personality was one night, up late on a subreddit, putting all of the pieces together! What a fool I was! What a dummy! And oh, the projection. Your most uncute qualities, you thought they were mine.

11.10.22

the morning light, i sip coffee and remember i'm a poet. all of the astrology memes are true. a few minutes before work. to make music and poetry for a living. this is the only goal. my little girl turns 9 tomorrow. time is just passin' me by. i hope you are well. and have enough coffee.

i'm committed to being on another level, from today onward. start anywhere. if music and the written word make me joyous, there's no other solution than to simply follow that! so what if they can't comprehend the meaning. so what if no one innerstands me for however many days i have left here.

also calling in my fine feline jungle friend, rippling and shifting camo. her ability to be selfless, and kind, and see the big picture will ultimately bond my energy to hers, and deliver us into the arms of one another. it's too easy. the universe doesn't answer in yes or no, only in resonance & attention.

11.26.22

waking up on the right side of the bed. my little girl, my first born, now nine years young- making me breakfast, waking up with wonder & awe, telling me about how a bird pooped on her gym teacher. before dawn my mind raced, to the thousands owed, to my imminent bankruptcy, and then i lifted my head to change planes, finding my 9yo twin, tandem waking, telling me that a silly car didn't matter, somehow culling my worries, somehow soothing my mind. it's not ok to be in this situation, but only in the eyes of perfectionist adults. and so, i wonder, how is it ok

for the innocent child? i can only suppose because the needs of the innocent are vastly different- and rightfully so- and needs can only be met when natural law is in place, namely, always. so i'm trying to find natural law. find a natural, calm, just solution. solution management week. wholesome solutions for peace and prosperity. out of this, a new mate, a journey out of isolation and survival mode, a new jerusalem, a way to sustain and coregulate grid living. i love to write, if only to change the energy, if only to self-soothe, better than springtime sex, better than a new-used car. a paid-off one. the source of my lack is definitely within, and to disarm it and rise above, i'll be in a more neutral zone. its origin is in fear of authority figures and shying from bullies, its origin, a ragtag bunch of cackling, rich (but not in spirit), old white men who marginalize women and talk stocks & sports. i have no footing in the excrement of our financial systems and backwards thinking of the elite.

it all blends perfectly now, because i am surrendering booze & self-shame, even if it takes me all year. just as quickly as she soothes, my baby sets me off. telling me to "shut up" and making me play out her fantasy cafe until it fits her liking. the pendulum swings, my mood shifts. i frustrate easily. it comes from the generations of power whores and alcoholic husbands before me. it comes from the confusion and lack of centuries. it comes from booze & blood-borne pathogens. information is stored in stone and bone. these shackles bust when i feel their oppressors, those who cast these tools in steel and amalgams of old. a shackle is only as good as its key. and this morning, in "these streets" of detroit, i somehow have the key. it's a twisted one, it's bent and has to be wiggled upon entry, you think it's the wrong one altogether. so you leave it inside, and then realize you need it when the door shuts behind you. here are the tongs on the main thoroughfare of mine: patience, love, integrity, silence, balance, fairness, reciprocation, compassion, closeness, forgiveness, equality, tenderness, natural law, slow progress, sleep, satiated kindness, remembrance of true love. this key opens all doors.

01.15.23

my sister helped me out of the hole, of car impounded and apartment evicted. i thaw two frozen burritos- the kids play quietly after an hour of running in the park. a rarity for kids in mid-january in michigan, so i'm feeling ambitious and accomplished. my mom gave me some cannabis edibles and pizza leftovers. i'm comfortable with no alcohol and it's getting better. my biggest energetic task for the weekend is completed (entertaining two young girls), and so i rest and type. coming to terms with my slow-release medicine. coming to terms with the jaded and angry. bringing to light the liars and naysayers, the reversals. a colleague recently told me at work, "you look out of it", and this was partly true, i suppose, but less so because she had never really said anything to me otherwise, and her and i don't draw from the same resource pools. she is a fucking fool for this. a mother of 4 girls, nonetheless, and only masking her own out-of-it-ness by putting down a staff member, lower on the totem than her. and so- power corrupts. and

the women who have tried to overpower me have always lost, namely because they know not my softness. others have come before me. but none like me. none can replicate the density of a nervous system unraveled.

and also, ready to die. to go at any moment. the biggest gash would be to leave my kids in pain. but to teach a lesson to my ex-spouse, and have her pull her head out of her ass. what a silly child. i have three children, actually. the choices she made in Mexico '21 (letting Z almost drown, flying A home on a plane alone) warrant ripping heads off. her outright lack of care and attention to these children is demonic. i can only let it be washed away, because she knows not. alas, a child. a sunny day in detroit. we got chais. went to the crystal shop at rustbelt. played outside.

1.27.23

earlier this morning, RIO ROSE stepped onto earth. the newest James girl. she chose Bianca & Jessie as moms and Mosi as a sister. she chose our huge, chaotic family as home base. i'm so happy! in tears this morning. working to count my blessings again. and again. i keep thinking about texting Ashley. i must have something in me that's deep seeded, needs intimacy now, needs verification. but maybe these are normal parts of humankind, human becoming, something in me that wants to be loved and to keep living happy- every day- this is the goal. would love a cuddle and squish party tonight. not gonna lie. but instead, i'll play the part of taxi driver, from 8-12pm? and then hoping to bust up a 4-7am shift tomorrow. this brings in the much needed 300-400 per week needed for grid living. hoping to transmute this to writing or music one day. this is merely my 2023 morning hustle.

2.18.23

take my hand and see. where we could go. will you take the lead. leave the fear behind. and let me know. now. walk with me. lead me to the light. show me where to go. cuz i need your counsel. give me strength so i can be. let your walls fall down. i'm lost without your way. we had it all. my undivided. let's change the way we are. we'll have it all. just like before. hold me close. guilt and pain has made me honest once again. so can i show you all the lessons learnt? if not now, then when?

2.19.23

i'm realizing something epic. well, a few things. that writing and improvising feels good. that letting go feels really good. zen coughs, aura worries. ten years ago, today- give or take a breath- aura was conceived. beth and i taught a partner workshop in holly the night before. we woke up sunday morning and made love, it was so beautiful. it was on the coattails of a major breakup. and i always wonder: did AURA wait until we had that fight? i remember beth locked me out. but i snuck in. and we hugged in the laundry room and we called it. like actually broke up. 2013. and then in late february she found out. and waited all day to tell me. and life

began.

05.14.23

At Ania's. She is letting me and the girls stay here. And at just shy of 3 years, I am out of The Crow's Nest. Had some special feelings in that place. The Old Apartment. Met Ashley, met challenges, stayed at Jessie & B's, experienced great grief and limitless pleasure. I had not lived on my own in almost 20 years. I had one apartment that was solely mine at 24, then Scoobs moved in. It was a perfect summer. 2004. Funny how we hold on to moments for decades. It starts. Will I remember it in another 20?

Take my hand....and let's take a ride, backwards down the number line, you were 8 and i was 9. Laughing all these many years, pushed through hardships, tasted tears.

05.17.23

Talking to a few ladies, Katrice- from Port Huron. Roz- who happens to be Stella's homeroom teacher. Victoria- who lives a block away. And Arty- a sweet young mom from India. All with special gifts. All a tad nutz. But we shall see. All with issues. All a bit unstable. But can any of them have a little fun? That's all I want to know, is if you can still have fun in 2023?

09.17.23

Time to check back in. Upstairs in Peasant Ridge. Another day, another rental. I imagine a world with only keys I see, only I know where they hide. I receive secret instructions. I glide effortlessly to the next destination, I pull the sword from the stone, I run-2-3-leappp to the next building, I repel and swing and land soft. I'm gaining the CDA for the childhood psychology tour. I'll give it ten years and then move strictly to music by 52. Perform until the final breath. I'm ready to tour now. I've had the life experiences, I've had the kids- and now that they're old enough. I know now. Ania's bent is strange and she somehow expects me to take care of Axl- I don't have the heart to tell her he's not happy anymore- I'm positive that when people are sad, they don't see things clearly and don't ask for help. It's silly of me to assume I know anything of grief. It's not linear, it's neverending. It only takes a moment to change it.

10.17.23

Axl passed. That moral dilemma has ended. I'm huddled under a blanket, was reunited with India, a single mom who somehow is into me, after she blew me off six months ago- I ran into her at Linus's birthday party- and she's been somewhat kind and managed to get back in touch with the dude. It me. So somehow I ended up with the good hand. A power play. And although I want the sensitive lover, the artist, the muse- she's left-brained and likely a better balance for me. But who the FUCK knows what kind of balance I need but me. Stay in my lane. Keep up with the

yoga and sobriety. Get sober for my birthday. I pored over old photos. In 2019 I made peace with my father. I can remember that damn thing like it was yesterday. Came across a screenshot of him laying into me. How do people live like this? Constant criticism? It's catching up to him. He didn't show up at his retirement party- the one party I'm sure he would have been at! Seems like I don't even know my old man. True enough. Grist for the mill. Making me into the dad I was always meant to be. Not sure I want to commit. Had a fun summer with Katrice. She saw me as I was, as I am. I'm grateful. I'm not trying to be something I'm not. And I'm coming to terms with the things I AM. Like, for as much as my heart bursts for not being able to see my hunnys, I'd just like the background noise of them playing as I try to sleep. I realize how powerful of a feeling this is. And music, to start a band with Steve & Lauren, and to host a xmas jam, how lovely all of this could be!

12.30.23

Ms. Amaya over. Amp Fiddler died. I'm dating a black girl. Again. White girls- So much drama. But I'm learning how to be wholly holy again. And tomorrow night we'll go to an early dinner and laugh. Our girls met earlier today at great lakes crossing- michigan's largest fucking mall. Wahoo. But the girls loved it and I love when they meet up with other kids (of color) and be free. Something I definitely wasn't integrated with when I was younger. They know no different. Anyway. Trying to set some new goals, take it easy and go with the flow in 2024. Time is speeding up. I am a ripe 44. And I feel finally- some momentum. Beth is still a fucking wreck, but I'm learning not to own it. The girls still have PTSD from the split, but I'm learning not to own it. And whatever will be, will be. And it always was. Time loops back around. I'll write every day in the new year. A new ritual. Music. Words. Love. And yes, Peace.

1.1.24

Jackie & I went out to dinner last night. First time in years I've been out in on NYE...but we had fun and retired early to the bowerbird's nest. We let go a bit- felt each other deeply- we talked about relationships and rehashed questions and tried to figure out if we trusted each other. My eastside boo. It's wild, because I'm her first and she's mine. So there's like- an innocence to it. A discovery. A curiosity, if you wanna call it that. But yet, defending ourselves, because we've both (thought we've) loved and lost. And so. We were awakened (3am sharp) to many missed calls, and a situation: her daughter Mya was in some trouble. Some older ladies at a party got drunk, and realized that one of the kids there (!!!) had bullied one of theirs. The adults wanted to bully the kids! That's fucked up! Now I don't know much about this kind of situation, but quickly realized the brevity of it all- tossed on clothes, threw in contacts and hit the family buggy- for a third zigzag to her house and back. Much of relations are this, the driving, the menial trips, the ride or die shit, and I see it's all water under the bridge. But there are other things. Jackie was in a car accident a year ago, and she seems to be in chronic pain. I try not to ask about it, but I can intuitively sense that it's not fun.

For her. I'm a giver, a nurturer, so I offer what I can. But I realize my rider, my list of things I need prior to showtime. The rider is under constant scrutiny. It changes. It seems music will, once again, be the only medicine that will suffice. I am setting a goal to visit Jamaica in late April. And so it is. Make moves.

1.14.24

The gears are turning in my mind. I'd like to make 500 dollars a day. This is the new goal to bring in more spare time to feed the creative motion and the art I love so dearly. I will make 500/day. I will make 500 dollars per day. As soon as the momentum is built. And this should provide ample time to travel. Catal Huyuk, San Francisco, The Congo & Oslo. Places I'd never dream of. Kashmir. Is there time? Assuming I don't chase women, yes. Alas, the great struggle. I gave a homeless man my gloves. The girls and I walked today in -2 degrees farenheit. I'm getting puffier eyes, age spots and gnarly teeth & toenails. The body is going. Got fucking pink eye a few weeks ago. It was absolutely horrible, lol. It laid me out. I didn't wear contacts for the whole week. Lol. I'm better now.

As I continue to make music, I suppose I'd love songs that soothe, that make you want to meet me, and hear my story. My poetry is disjointed, it's sparse and simpleton, it's really nothing to write home about. But I know she's out there. My stint with the mentally ill out there has taught me something. My future mate may not be drop-dead to the eyes, but will bring some crystal clear levity and laughter to the table. There is so much wrong with the world today. People are blank, they have lost their will to create. They worship sports and politics. The Epstein List. Gaza. Ukraine. Lahaina. The world is in flames. It's getting worse. And I always considered myself an optimist: I had a good childhood, I've experienced some of what life has to offer. I'll make 500USD a day, and have time to travel, and build my FURever home. A couple dogs. Something simple.

And with this vibration, a new world awaits. And she'll be there, patiently, reading into my songs. Adding harmony and honey. There is still hope for the sleeping bear. There is still spring. Here are some recent musings about her and her ways:

once upon a time.
unmet needs were met.
i overslept and rarely did i.
check my checking account.
nor take anything personally.
what little i owned was.
fashioned into a home.
sticks and stones.
my mate attending.
my morning request.
and breakfast.

banana & coffee.
carefully.
morning walk.
may the band all be there.
when my mate and i get back.
oh, they're late, one more request.
resplendant rainbows in her hair.
and in the lawn's morning dew.
when my glasses aren't there.
she'll be fair.
and kind, and talk to me.
when anger grips her mind.
damn the ghosts who
left her behind.

1.23

Jackie was over last night. We talked and sorted through the contrast of our worlds. Although she is a patient lover and kind, something flipped at the end and I made her cry. She said that she wasn't upset but WAS confused. I'm so lost as to how women form emotional bonds. It's quite complex and I know for a fact men are simpler creatures- is this our bane or our blessing? In any event, I hope not to block my blessings and continue to stay open, unguarded and vulnerable, because I know there is power in it.

in any event
the search for a lover
temporarily suspended
due to a high bar standard
will resume shortly, after
i refine my emotional intel
and return to the source of
my innate needs, namely
music and nature, my
one true love is simple
love is patient, love is kind
love is never rude

2/7

Took Jackie to surgery today. She was a total trooper. Kind texts from her mother. Sweet ma was out. Done up by drugs and a slashed throat. I really love her deeply, because we laugh, because it's real, and realness and laughter are the meds I need these days. She doesn't always let me get off so easy. She kind of razzes me and I like it. She calls me "skinny man" and "ash-boned" and I know, with love in my heart, it's all projection. And although I have nothing, I have everything. It's

easy. I'm rich. Too easy. I meet all of these folks with endless resources, lost to the flow. There is something there. I'm almost on.to. it. I'd love to learn about hedge funds and investments and shit like that. But I fear it may take a piece of my international heart. Are you gonna let me down? That's all a new partner wants to know. They try to decipher the question in different ways: Money, Sex, Power. Control. But the question remains. The dating apps are a mess because these single birds answer the question before they even ask it. And so- they lose.

She cried because she couldn't feel her whole left side. In total vulnerability. In total collapse. That's when things get real. And I feel it, I've been there. We've both been there. That's the connection. And it's forever. So all of these branches. Perhaps there's not the sexual fantasy fulfilled- or the money or power- but if there's a thread where you blast off and lose yourself in the other...YOU WIN. Because this is love. To surrender. And see yourself as the other. The final goal is the first goal. A kiss. A conection.

2/21

Jackie dumped me last night. I kinda remember how it feels to be dumped, it kinda stings. She told me she wanted to "put space" between us. Clever. And I really kinda fell for her, even though it was an unlikely match and we were from different worlds. She was kind, loving and supportive of the girls. These alone were gold. I miss her.

2/27

Jackie came back, I had another crazy february of car repairs, possible/imminent (financial) collapse, and false starts. Today is 65 degrees in sunny. February easily glides. I'm hoping for a tax return, a ex-wife return (finally, McGrackles will pay me), and a work check to seal the deal on a new apartment. There might be some overlap, there might be a weekend of sleeping at my sister's. There will never be a return to mom & dad's. Mom has helped me out, saved me- but I realized Dad has NOT and never WILL. He is incapable of loving himself, and it manifests in his anger towards her and his kids. In 2019 I really went deep to forgive him. I asked for his help again last year and this. It's clear he's lost his way. And truth be told, maybe some day I'll lose my way- but I'll never ignore my duty to my children- and I'm shocked he has.

But when the body goes, the mind and the spirit do, too. It's all related. And so to keep my vessel in a certain kind of shape is a good goal. But these goals are different. I'm ready to be out of debt, to have cash to plan trips instantaneously, and follow my passions. Writing music and following a simple life are the goals. Get back to gardening. Get back to being outside. Invest in a little crypto. Invest in a little cabin up north. Camp and be free and see some shows.

It's funny though, in this line of work, because I'm meeting all kinds of wealthy

folks, and none of them seem happy or fulfilled. It's easy to read energy after 15 years of seeing bodies move in yoga. Energy gets trapped- tension. Thoughts get trapped- stress. Ania punched out the window in her own front door and blamed me for being locked out! I didn't think twice of it. Now, twenty years ago I'da been shook to my core. I'd apologize profusely. But now I apologized for HER anger, as in- sorry- why are you doing this- to YOURSELF- YOU are experiencing this on your behalf. You overload yourself. You did this to yourself. You pull the strings. You make the vessel move.

And for these reasons, I know NOONE takes responsibility for me, NOONE owes me anything. Similarly, I disown all harsh talk, negative speech, expectation for me to succeed in any sort (unless it is of pure loving/divine order), nasty glares, ghosting, gossip, giving neg, and any contract that says I have to fit in to the capitalist/oligarchic scheme, reversals of any sort, and evil lizzie agenda- McGrackles' or otherwise- and so it is.

No one ever said you had to fit in to all of this, or jive with having a body, or support diseased systems and faulty logic, backwards societies or reversals, and instead- you are free to change the game, wish what you will, follow the still-small voice in your heart, and glean joy from the moments that never go away. Because this is what life is made of. Moments. And these moments are passing by so quickly, and not another breath guaranteed. And no one owes you any moments. And eventually they end.

3/5/24

At Julie's. I've moved everything out of Ania's. The last four days have been a non-stop grind. Storage unit full, affectionately named JOONIT. A dinner prepared for me for the first time in ages. A full bank account, a new place awaits. Friends don't call. This key opens all doors. Maybe I should start calling my friends again? This is why cancers value their privacy? This is why geminis don't? Time affluence is starting its return on investment. More lessons learnt. Aura is facetimeing me. The hardest part is that she misses me.

3/9/24

Trusting the process. Do I want to live in Detroit again? Or do I simply want to squeak by for another 20 years? Prosperity and time affluence is the name of the game. I can talk about doing music, or just do it. I can talk about retreats, or just do them. It's time for a new leaf. First leaf on the tree. Sober podcast, travel the world. Write from this laptop. Write about dreams. Make dreams manifest. Jane treated us to a hotel last night. The Holiday Inn in Troy. We drink Tang and frolic in the freebies. We imagine the new apartment and I reveal my plan Bs. Aura had minor heart pains last night and took me through a little scare. Her anxiety cripples her, it's hard for her to disarm. Pizza and swimming didn't work. She briefly touched on the things from the day that added to it, about how her friends Sabrina

& Everleigh were being rude to her- she was offended- and how she wished her mom & I still lived in the same house. These moments are hard. Some hard lessons, some hard truths. But it boosts my confidence, because I have to tell my story- I have to rebrand my image and puff up my chest and be the man I never was. Which is hard, because I have to disarm the old story. I have to write the new one. And it's easy, really. I've gleaned the freedom I've earned. I'm happy where I am, even if it is between homes on a weekend from a third floor hotel. The girls are mostly happy & healthy, which is pure gold and more than I could ask for. They pretend and eschew tv, until BRAVE comes on, they emulate a thick Scottish brogue and talk about the triplets' hair and trickster smiles.

I'm homeless, and it brought me some mild anxiety earlier this week, trying to figure out a way to pay 3k simply to move into a home. I suppose this is the "reality" of it, and I know peoples' judgments, and family thoughts and scornful egos, but there was never any contract. I remind myself. There was never any contract, that I have to master any of this- not that I don't WANT to- but that I HAD to- impress others, impress my kids and be a certain way, be of a certain manner, exist in the next tax bracket, etc.

And that's all I have to do. Remind myself that I'm enough. Remind myself that healing is not linear. That love is the greatest force. That things DO change. That people DO change. That everyone needs a second chance. This life is short. And there are many instances where you don't THINK you can make it better, but you can. A smile. A tiny gesture, holding the door open for someone for an extra minute. Tiny things. And these are the things that make up love. There are so many- but we see so few.

3/18

Things moving forward today. People asking for money. People getting paid. My mom telling me not to ask for more help. That's what happens AFTER you ask for help "one too many times". A tiny part of my heart is exhausted. And I'd check out if I didn't love life an ounce more. My father dies silently with a loaded bank account and a body that fails him. My sisters all carry on with their daily lives. I move into the new place on April First. No foolin'. I'm alone and secretly loving it...I motioned for 50/50 and Beth is fuming. Leave me the fuck alone and get on with your life. But she still wants power. There are certain qualities that one should possess as they move through this life. And tbh, I've maintained most of them. There are a few I've yet to master. Sometimes, you receive unwarranted advice. And sometimes- you give it. Well, so many others are giving it to me these days. And yet, they are allowed, and I don't owe them anything. But I've given everything. Nothing left.

But somehow, I have everything. Moving forward, I have gained confidence in my battle against my ex-spouse. BATTLE is not the word I'd usually use, but it has

become one, indeed. It has taken every last drop of energy and every last dime. It has me crying the moment I wake up and left me in tears as I succumb to sweet sleep. I'm not a renaissance man but I know how feelings and art and commerce work- I'm not an idiot but I've certainly made some unwise choices along the way. I'm hoping not to commit marriage to this category. I'm not as vibrant as I used to be. But somewhere over the rainbow, somehow- around the corner is a pot of gold, an excellent long-term mate, and a handful of solutions. Jackie has been immeasurable and invaluable in her support and positive, kind words. Scoobs has assisted, too, letting me use his place for the girls and I this last week of March. Jane has pumped me up and taken me to FOC for documents and answers. Mom has flushed me with cash to repair my brakes and keep groceries in the kitchen. Ania provided me with an interim to move forward, even if she DID bust out a window and blame me for locking her out of her own house! Caitlin came in at the last minute for a cousin hang.

It all hasn't gone unnoticed, but it has shed light on the millions without a safety net, without family or friends to help, for without them all I'd be in the back of the van all spring. I'm so grateful, and also a tad disgusted with myself- like how the fuck did I get here, anyway? Whose idea was this? Was it mine, so that I could lotus out of the mud of my old ways? or was it a combo of bad decisions and laziness? I'm happy not to ever solve it, and continue to tap away and work it all out day by day. It will ALL be ok. Bless yourself.

3/19/24

This week, a pivotal shift. I will make 350 and scrape up 650 next week. All to move in to the new cut. It has to happen. There is only this. Everything rests on this. India is texting me back. Something funny happens when a friend reacts ten days later. Like, is it that you didn't see my message? Or is it- you saw it- and ten days of thinking? Is the quick, emotional reaction sometimes a blessing? Or are these not the true colors?

One thing is for certain- there are many layers to this reality, the ghosting, the domination and control, the projection, the sweating the small stuff, the insane games people play- telling me I can't make mistakes, telling me how I'll see my own kids, telling me what to eat and what health is and what prayer is. It's all ridiculous. And then, to arrive at work and have to deal with these BABIES (and by babies I mean adults) -this is simply the icing on the cake.

And I flow through it, I dip and weave, up Livernois and down Gratiot, from the high north of Clarkston to the slums of Romulus, I drive people and hear them out and help them into the family buggy. I am the great silent cabbie, I hear the unheard and see the unseen, I floor it to pass on the right as to miss the semi, and brake in the far left lane at rush hour, I scoot from Plymouth the Highland Park and back again, move from Hazel Park to Beverly Hills to Detroit to Pleasant Ridge, and one

day I'll escape this wild endless city, its potholes and homeless gurus and hookers, all its glory and gore, it's filth and wisdom, and I'll move to the woods and speak for the trees. It's all coming.

3/25/24

I write to change the energy. Staying at Steven's. One more week. Today the girls stayed with my father and he told me he didn't know how to run the clothes washer. Then he proceeded to take us to his favorite two pastimes: lunch and a carwash. Steve got a new phone. The girls watch Bluey and I'll wait until they fall asleep to watch a documentary on Freaknik. I'm eager to move into the new place. And yet, if my life ended tomorrow I'd be ok. I'm exhausted and taxed. No sign of the tax return. Did they garnish the wages? WTF could they possibly want next? I'm tired and out of resources. I'm searching for angels in the wind. My mom is still there. A tea set and grocery money. I'd most certainly be homeless by now. I remember in 2009, in Portland, Beth thought I was cheating on her and kicked me out. I packed my bags and started off on my bike. She stopped me in that moment. I most certainly should have pedaled on. But these girls, these two queens, I owe them my best foot forward and they are everything. They try me daily but I am out of the loop. So I need to return to yoga. I need to revise my mind and revitalize my body. I'm grateful for Scoobs and the others who have helped lift me up. It's been a hard month but it's almost over. I'm not sure how much energy I have for relations or work or life right now. I'm gonna have to dig deep to find my essence, restart the musical game, and carry on. 2024 has made 2021 look like baby poop.

3/26/24

West on Puritan, East on Oakland, north on 75, south on the lodge, I dip and weave and I am timeless. I am a master of the spokes of the motor city. Semis see me, I give them room, and outlaws don't- they look to their destination. 10,000 miles on the new ride. It will last until late summer, I will trade it in. Lincoln MKX. Luxury. Moving up from the slums. I move back to Detroit to be reacquainted with my community. To move closer to my people. I shun excess and the games people play. I continue to negotiate an exit to the matrix. I'm not going underground. My girls play and pretend. In this fashion, as I listen to them, I know I've done alright. In these moments, when I don't have to entertain them, I know I'm a good dad.

It's crunch time. Fourth quarter, baby. It's not over, baby. And I'm not afraid of what I don't know. One week left before I can exhale in the new joint. 7 & Livvy. Very central, I must say.

4/8/24

Solar Eclipse today. 500 rides on Lyft. A morning call with Jackie and the girlies. A stubborn ex-spouse. Luckily her new fiancee is a solid helper. Bless you, Patrick. You're showing me kindness in an age of darkness. Whose idea was this, anyway?

I slam a quickie of eggs, potatoes, rice & beans, a little salsa. I procure one more careful pourover and head to the dayjob. Plan is to make 50 in the morning, 50 at night. Plus the dayjob. More like blowjob. Alas, if I'm fit to serve, I'm there. Today will fly by. In the end, only kindness matters. I'll be served my kindness aggregate (a la credit score) at my final breath. Otherwise, it's all a jumble.

I dip, I weave. I write to change the energy. Send some mail. Gas up the van. Say hello to strangers. Comb my beard. Plan a trip to Hawai'i. Stay in my own fucking lane. Sounds easy enough.

Later that day: a few more rides. A tip. A message from Jackie: she needs space. She pulled the pump fake on me before. Maybe that's what love really is. Today flew by. Can't believe I have to do it again tomorrow. Trying to pin down what it is I'm ambitious about. Does the algorithm know if you're ambitious? Does the algorithm trust?

Trying to guess what the computer thinks of you is the final straw. I write to change the energy. I go to bed and wake up, teach yoga at 630, conventional job, scoop a loft bedframe for the riflebirds, then rest. Will try to squeeze in a handful of rides. xoxo xxoo.

4/9/24

Felt the anxiety come up again. I'm a people pleaser. So in isolation, I feel like I've pleased everyone- if everyone is leaving me alone. But in reality, the anxiety I feel from NOT pleasing everyone is the big reversal. Self-shame. And Beth has caught wind of this, and four years later, still using it. Alas, I did my best today, and didn't get triggered, didn't reply, just blocked her. The worst is over. It's 74 degrees! And it's April. Made it. I'm in the new place with a FEW WORRIES but not MANY. I'm excited to move forward and meet "jungle girl". She's the one I've been dreaming of for a few years now. She'll be kind, and patient. She'll have kids of her own, and see the big picture. Perhaps she'll write to change the energy or play music for medicinal purposes. Always remember:

BE IMPECCABLE WITH YOUR WORD
DON'T TAKE ANYTHING PERSONALLY
DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS
ALWAYS DO YOUR BEST

4/19-4/21

I suppose the 420 holiday always had something in it for me, as I WAS a midnight toker, joker & a smoker. I love reggae and weed culture. It's harmless and silly. And perfect. My dad sold thai sticks on the low as a side hustle. But as time as gone

on, my sensitivity to ganja has heightened, along with a need for far less of the facemelting breeds out there today.

But moreso the specialness of the holiday is the reminder that these are the days Aura started to feel better in Bali. It was a hard week of dis-ease, her Spirit was definitely initiated (all of ours were) as we bounced back to enjoy the last couple weeks of the jungle.

Landing home in Hazel Park was a trip- what are we doing here? And it just felt so strange to walk in the door to home. It felt that it wasn't my home. That wherever I'm standing always is.

And the girls are having a party, as we did already! So I'm normalizing not arriving at the party. Can't make all the parties. They'll have a fine time without me. A better time, lol???

I'm accepting my fate. I write to change the energy. I'm done unloading the JOONIT. It's done. Well, ok, a table, a carseat, some xmas stuff. One last load. Tuesday. I'll do it Tuesday. Zen is 6.

4/27/24

The girls play easy, after a fretful, anxious night from Aura. I realize more and more it's all about control with her. She's not scared, or worried, even. At night and in the morning are the best times to control myself or her mom. I read a page from a book and she snored easily. A trip to trader joe's and Julie's. I'm looking back into retreats. I'd like to shift gears now. It's all about mastering the art of being alone- to call in the REAL jungle goddess. Beth was a facade. She could only mirror me, which is not a blow, nor a diss- but she doesn't know who she really is. So that's why she's been in codependent relationships for over 20 years. I'm relegating to the fact that if the vision doesn't align perfectly, it's nothing.

5/11/24

Aura is officially 10 and a half today. She runs over to Zen and punishes her. She's mad because we didn't go to Panera, lol. She's mad because the YMCA smells and we had to sit through her sister's first swimming lesson. She's mad because I break up a fight, she's mad because it's been a whole 5 weeks since I've moved in and I still have shit strewn about. I'm mad because she's already dropped a few F-bombs and called her sister a B-word. Her mom is a poor example of language, communication and many things. I try to ignore that old troll but she just keeps popping out from under the bridge. McGackles, that old crone. Fucking tourist. Try to guess how the computers view you. I write to change the energy. I write to shift the tides. I write to meet jungle girl. She'll like redwoods. She'll like Neil Young. She'll like coffee and the ocean.

5/18/24

A week later, we're back at Ursula's house with Romeo, her goldendoodle of 10 years. He's a good dog, and it's easy money. I mow her lawn, the cleaning lady comes, we check out a neighborhood art festival. Zen buys a cookie with a marshmallow on top. Teaching my girls about consequence and cause/effect is really taxing. I mostly always take the blame, even when I try to relay lessons in a mellow, egalitarian fashion. I do laundry, I continue the grind even though in my mind I'm on vacation. I'm moving forward with two retreats: Breitenbush NYE25, and Aloha2025

6/2/24

And so it goes. I write to change the energy. The girls still cherish the four porcelain Avon Ducks I bought years ago at a blown out estate sale in Clarkston. Alongside a straight razor and some jars? Not sure I why I buy the things I buy. I suppose it brings some comfort. But alas. So does a lover. I know I don't seek someone outside of me to fulfill me- but instead, to be alongside them, to feel touch and comfort, an occasional compliment, a meal and a laugh here and there. Jackie revived my hope in a fun moment with a mate of my choice. She has since faded, needed a few weeks to herself, just recently called back to "check up on me". Honestly think she may have simply missed my presence. Because, ngl, aja, I am something wonderful...I say it to myself in secret, in the quiet hours before dawn- after laying down at the end of an interminable workday. They never cease to come. And gradually, new lovers will come into view, they will shoot their shot and try their hands at compassion, and being chill, and having kids of their own, these mamas will speak volumes only by the vibration of their kids, and nothing else. I will judge, hesitantly, and presuppose on this alone.

Ecstatic to have Kayla come by. We spent most of May getting acquainted, saw Neil Young, had ice cream, kissed in the woods. You're on your way over tonight. Can't wait to see you. Continuum.

6/8

brainstorms for male-only retreat:

a map is useless unless you know how to place yourself on it
as men, we need to strengthen the inner compass, nourish the intuition, and
reclaim our birthright

join us in this transformational retreat, where we'll rediscover the art of myth-making, relieve anxiety with yoga & meditation, tune in to the archives of master teachers-

access the living library within our own cellular memory. cut generational curses that no longer serve, release the bonds of toxic modern-day city living, unplug

from technology for a week, etc

we'll be at our venue during the new year transition, which is often fraught with overeating, binge drinking and anticipation of another year- in this session we'll access the present, release the past, and look forward to new opportunities already on the way

our venue is an off-grid, community-run hot springs, intentionally disconnected from wifi and the internet. a digital detox. lodging is unlocked as to encourage a mode of trust. substance-free, clothing optional health & wellness

6/17/24

i'm trying not to think too hard about it, about partnership, about dating, about lovemaking, about finding a soulmate, about whether i'd need one at all, about homebuying, about parenting, about summer. about competence. and then it all clicks- i'm wonderful, i'm a poet, i'm a GOOD dad, too, and i'm learning, i'm vulnerable, and i'm being courageous by even existing. 375 for the retreat floating my way this week. Nor sure how, not sure how. Whiskey when I'm dry? Sweet heaven when I die.

Kayla has been returning my texts and showing up for epic dates. A likely match, feels good, two deep introverts w/ a little story each. It feels good, it feels good, gonna leave it at that and see what comes, or who comes, or how in tandem the coming will be.

7/13/24

two young black girls doing back handsprings in the median of livernois- all too cinnamony apple pie- improv songs with my ZEN- a golden, epic sunset on the day trump got shot- how do you miss that shot- my ex-spouse talking to my 10yo about how JFK got his "brains blown out"- no filter McGackles- my worth is not tied to being understood- 10pm bedtime in the summer- no more screentime for 101 days- maybe more icecream tomorrow- don't take it personally- how do you miss that shot!

7/28/24

bill withers' LEAN ON ME- new PUR water filter needed- girls playing coffee shop and reveling in free, unsupervised play- 100 degrees in the D today- hoping to hit the lake, but happy to stay home and do nothing- not taking it personally today, ever- starting over, continuously- went on a date last night, paid my niece \$50 to go out for an hour and a half, it was SO worth it- pay to play- a new phase- life is passing me by, i am aging gracefully- i've fallen in love these last few months and it's nothing short of a relief- sometimes fear creeps in with the unknown- but good to know it's not real if it doesn't feel good-

8/9/24

fitter. happier.
more productive.
comfortable.
not drinking too much.
regular exercise at the gym.
getting on better with your associate.
employee contemporaries.
at ease.
eating well.
a patient, better driver.
a safer car.
sleeping well.
no paranoia.
careful to all animals.
keep in contact with old friends.
will frequently check credit at bank.
fond, but not in love.
charity standing orders.
on sundays, ring road supermarket.
car wash.
no longer afraid of the dark.
nothing so childish.
at a better pace.
slower and more calculated.

8/17/24

I remember 2020, corona & divorce. Searching for an apartment in haste. I remember the wave of emotion. Searching for a new partner. I remember Ashley the Rebound. A total mess. As it should have been. Learning. I'm still learning. The total letdown of all of that. The complete collapse of summer '21. Wondering if the deep catharsis would end. I remember my garden that summer. How it bloomed and I'd go there, 3 summers ago, smoke cigarettes and drink after work, and talk to the plants. That's all i had energy for. I remember waking up and praying in the morning- that i'd make it through the day- and then thanking Great Spirit that I made it to the nighttime. I remember a similar lesson last fall. Chasing women and realizing, ultimately, none of them gave a fuck. Making them dinner, pouring my heart out. Getting nothing in return. Knowing i was a total score. A prize. And knowing, secretly, rightfully so, that one of them was in MJ training. And so. I remember in 2022, searching for nothing, knowing nothing, on the other side of bottoming out- still cathartic- eviction and repossession- secrets only a few knew of. A father who shamed me for it. The deeper lesson in parenting. This summer has been the other side. This summer the sun has been always hitting my face, the

wind always at my back. A resurgence, an ambition. A gentle breeze, my telekinesis. My dream cruise, my dreamboat is the lover who showed up at my door before 6am. She took me in and shamed not- measured and marveled at my art, replied to my texts and allowed me into her space. Fearing judgment, fearing our pasts, fearing a reaction? None of it. Our preteen girls synched. Our laughs shook each others' bodies. Our deep passions came out in the first kiss. We could barely get beyond the threshold of my small studio. She cared not about my status. She cared not about my accomplishments. There is little left to ask for. Life is simple. Life is grand. Life is without label or squinted eye. Achievement and ambition mean nothing if no one appreciates it. Life is short and to die alone is the fear. Life is beautiful and to die alone one morning would be just fine. Ready to go. I've traveled the world. Raised beautiful children. Made music. Made them laugh and cry. Made love to the only one who matters. And so it goes. 100 years. All new people.

8/31/24

She crashed her car this morning, two short hours after coming to me at 630am. I've been in a few car wrecks. Another blessing. Another lesson. More laughter and prose, more exhaling in each others' arms. Eastbound on 8 mile, she ran a red. The southbound woodward gent accelerated on green. This is how we learn lessons. Luckily I was closeby. The girls and I just visited earlier this evening. The girls and boys danced and somersaulted in the basement. Bass mint. Jax donned his Ghostbusters apparel. The brother took off and left the kids to his sister's company. There are certain dynamics to a family. There are certain unspoken rules. I know these rules. There is a mascot. There is a black sheep. There is a caregiver. There is a scapegoat. There are archetypes. I've finally heard the one about the Bible being spun like Jesus is the Archetypal Sun, and the stories are about the Universe. Believable as being on a disc-shaped (dreidel?) earth. A marble? Doubtful. See, level. Anyhow. I professed my love. Again. I'm a servant humbled by the hustle and flow of Wayne County. I'm a tiny speck in the big beach of emotion. I write to change the energy. There are more cars- crash them. There are more women- court them. There are more kids, love them. My eldest daughter is starting to get the message between acting sassafras and getting some TV after 9pm. It's easy, it's in your inflection. My new thing is to only answer questions. Weird, houses and info and neighborhoods and general knowledge? OK. Well, you're 10. Figuring out life is part of it. Learn the energy. Some are more accustomed to it than others. You only live one hundred million times. So here ya go, finish strong. Last body.

9/13/24

the girls are back. they met the neighbor boys, ozzie and jordan. they had a movie night. they ate candy. it all works out.

9/14/24

originally, i thought 2020 was the summer of love. in fact, it was the summer of self-immolation. big mood from the girls at TJs today. i had to catch my breath. reaching my edge. neither alcohol nor caffeine nor nicotine nor cannabis could ever suffice. but a calling from within. a lesson from the ancestors. the anger never worked for generations immemorial.

10/14/24

i'm here, took the day off, smoked a cigarette on the fire exit stairs. it feels good to go slow. yes, i want to be inspired to write and make music. it is a sunny 65 degree day at the height of color season. kayla and i have been rocking for 5 months- she's incredible- and will likely meet the others for tanxgiving. i'm using the rest of my PTO up this week and start the new gig monday. life is good.

i live in this tiny studio, but it's enough. i don't listen to beth's voice or the critical collective james voice. my family of origin is just that. but i love them, and that's enough. aura will be 11 on 11/11. exciting times as hormones ramp up and she becomes a lovely pre-teen lady :)

my spirits are high and my health is good. i'm up to 180lb, which is a 15lb increase from the 165 i maintained for 15 years. i'm practicing yoga and eating well. drinking and smoking very little. a cigarette here and there. an occasional joint. but oh, how much stronger the weed is these days!!!

you came in the morning
we came at night
only the moon was
out like a light
call up the sitter
to come watch the kids
and only two hours
for us to do this
the season of color
trees & the clouds
i kiss your forehead
i kiss your mouth
now here we're standing
the top of the hill
and we're called down to
come turn the mill
brothers and sisters
your life is short
don't feed your anger
don't feed your war
peace of the puzzle

is shaping your mind into one
way of being, one way of love

11.29.24

kayla is 32 today. i'll make her a cake, deliver a small gift later on. woke the girls early today to go meet cousin pat and his son henrik. it was a fucking mess. aura woke up screaming because i didn't do her laundry. they are reflective moments of her stressed out mom. idk how to react, so i get triggered- it's almost like she's CHANNELING her mother or something. and so, naturally, i lose it. but is it natural? no. i need a new spiritual practice. i need another way. 500 a day. it will feasibly start with 100 a day. then 200. then 300. but this is the steady incline i need to secure. i want time off, i want freedom. i want to camp and breathe and move. i still feel stuck in survival mode. the other side is- is- i'm doing just fine. it will all work out just fine. great spirit, be with me. give me energy to make it through the day peaceful.

12.15.24

I'd like to compile all of my journals, all of my writings, and all of my music into an interactive exhibit- to celebrate 20 years of recording music, 25 years of journaling, a couple decades of just solid creation- to look back and celebrate it all. It would be something to look forward to- as I shift back into my power. It has taken a legit 5 years since the divorce to somewhat seem normal. And this, this second week of december, UFOs appear and the next big distraction takes root. Trump is president again. I remember Bali and foreigners laughing at this. It is still laughable, although it is true and dangerous and shifting again. The river is flowing back to the sea. Mother carry me, your child I will always be. Mother carry me back to the sea. Music is still here. My art will always be here. It is ever-present medicine for me to use.

1.25.25

We're back at Ursula's. Romeo looks at the girls for cheese and treats. The girls fight about whose clothes are whose. Jen is in town. The sun rises over west ferndale. The day is new. I'm trying to continually count my blessings, over and over. It's hard, some days it's hard. The girls are growing fast. They fight about clothes and toys. They are unBELIEVably sassy for 6 and 11. Or maybe it's just me. Disarming my modes of control and surveillance. Growing up in an oligarchy. Trump is president again. Immigrant families losing everything, being deported. Women losing their rights again. What the fuck have we done? Life is more challenging in the late-january chill. But we'll walk, and follow the sun, and let the doggie breathe, and we'll give him kisses on his snout, and everything will be ok.

2.14.25

I won't kiss my girlfriend tonight, but soon. The girls are deep in pretend play. Today we journeyed to Fowlerville, MI, to celebrate the life of Anne Garvie, the last

grandparent passing. A new shift. Saw some old cousins. Met all of their kids. It was joyous, albeit brief. Returned to pick up my car in Beverly Hills, pick up my hens in Commerce, and return to Ferndale. Ferndale has been the home base since I moved here in 2006 with Jessie, and it has treated me right. Zigzagging all across this godforsaken town. The depths of winter, replaced by earlier sunrises and the final deep snowfall. 5 to 10 more inches this weekend. I have a mid-winter break, new to this in the schedule but oh, it is so welcome. I plan to pray tonight. I need to try to do this over and over, until it becomes ritual. If you can't stop it with your hands, stop it with your voice. If you can't stop it with your voice, stop it with your heart. Meaning: pray.

4.14.25

Excited to see Josh Davis at the keynote. 2000 women here and a few males. MIAEYC 2025. Buncha hens clucking. but i'm here on the laptop journal to brainstorm about MOTIF: the inaugural meeting of beards, dudes and the like:

MOTIF '25: molding the new archetype of the strong/sensitive male

this is about being enough. in the eyes of yourself. not to prove, not to compare, not to "MAN UP", but to become a lighthouse and shine for your peers to see. to become a mentor, one day, hopefully. for the younger generations. for seven generations. to walk confidently in the direction of feeling great and the life you want to live. we've all experienced trauma in various forms. most of us have felt called to cut generational cords, the ties that bind us to old patterns.

define:

fellowship: friendly association, especially with people who share one's interests.

ubermensch: coined in 1883 by Nietzsche- a person with great powers and abilities (beyond man)

motif: an important and usually repeating idea or theme in a work of art

model: (ACA)

1. hold space for the fellowship
2. empathy is good, but silence is better
3. exchange info after (text feed, cash app: \$agebouquet)
4. total transparency: for meals, trips and benefits

intro:

1. name, age & where you were born/raised
2. most significant challenge of the last 5 years
3. what you'd like to see most in your peers
4. a transformative moment from your life

talk story: travel and bali (tell the story about leaving 1.1.20) returning to divorce, relocation, eviction and repo, online dating, the ups and downs that arrived with online dating and the longing, and then finally meeting my soulmate. our recent trip to reunite with her father after 12 years apart.

some ice breaker questions (for parents):

what are some of the areas you feel you're not good enough in?
if you have gone through a divorce, what has changed since that day?
do you feel there is a stigma- as a male- to be a provider and protector only?
if you have traveled and seen other cultures, what shocked you about the dads there?

presence (animal breath):

sit facing each other, eye contact, open mouth breathing for one minute

silence (seated meditation):

sit facing yourself, no eye contact, closed mouth breathing for five minutes

4.23.25

Zen turned 7 yesterday. I picked her up from school and took her to gymnastics. She cut her ear today in school. I heard it wasn't anything major. Having the men's wellness circle take root tonight. Also got paid. Good combination. Talk starts at 830.

health is wealth, health is heal, be healthy

how are you feeling today?

what made you want to arrive to this?

what do you think you can bring to the table?

what is my intention?

create a community resource, re-establish community

the new ways are the old ways once again

we're here to communicate

the opposite of being in isolation is being in connection

listening is a big part of this, as much as talking is

if you feel called to share your resources, speak up

tell my story from the beginning of 2019

covid, the collective trauma, still healing

a little on my upbringing and how it has led to my habits

touch on ACA and the laundry list:

- we became isolated and afraid of ppl and authority figures
 - we became approval seekers and lost our identity in the process
 - we are frightened by angry ppl and any personal criticism
 - we live life from the viewpoint of victims and are attracted by that weakness in our love and friend relations
-
- we became addicted to excitement
 - we have "stuffed" our feelings from our traumatic childhoods and have lost the ability to feel because it hurts so much
 - we judge ourselves harshly and have a very low self esteem

4.26.25

so Joe Leibson showed up to the men's meeting, him and i, we chopped it up and talked about our dysfunctional families as we reinvent our identities. currently at this big old "gym" in ann arbor for Zen's 7th birthday party, but mostly holding space and pplwatching. seems like just an extension of UofM, with it's white privilege and bourgeoisie, talking about their trips to Phoenix and "oh, i remember that guy" and "we'll be working in the yard until 5p" even though it's just 1130am. a day of yard work. keeping up with the Joneses. as time goes on, i reassert my inner wealth, my health and my connections, and there's a little girl named Kayla here, or maybe it's a little boy, Caleb.

meanwhile, my lover exists in a beautiful space right beside me, and affirms and verifies and we boast a love unknown to most, with few layers of pampering and softness- a love supreme, a love far beyond, as we clarify and troubleshoot in our 11th month. more and more i enjoy doing nothing, and i learn to slow down continually, as i promised myself in my mid 30s, so now i am fulfilling that promise in my mid40s.

continually reminding myself that no one is in control, there are examples all over and around of how this world is a big mess, and i'm simply in charge of sweeping up. i help the homeless. i smile and nod at the bourgeoisie. i process my own dysfunctions and the adult children who raised me. i pray for my sisters and their wealth, and i hope they move into their philanthropic eras soon. i also remind myself that i am the black sheep, i am the pattern reverser, i am the psychedelic prince, heir to the wisdom unknown to my lineage, heir to the feelings unprocessed by my father's father. i am here and thriving, returning from another island and processing my travel, processing my relations and moving into a new space yet again.

if all the planets are direct, like they say, for the next week or so, this would be my time to make the move. i asked for the loan, got it. i told my love to go visit dad, she did it. i wanted the car before i came back from the trip, got it. wanted new boundaries in '25, asserting them. a small redhead boy just left the pool on a stretcher. i hope he's ok. i'm learning that there's a limited amount of things i can control. the rest is just always happening, always revolving. it's much better this spring than it was four springs ago. i thought it was the beginning, but it was indeed the phasing out of the old guard. it doesn't matter, i called it in, i wanted that final long lesson. why do we choose the hard lessons?

the little boy is ok. beth was the first to see him underwater, unconscious. and it hit her harder because ZEN almost drowned on her watch four years ago, in mexico. so here she was, giving her heartfelt account to the washtenaw county sheriff, in tears. one of the few times i've ever seen her cry. because the moment illuminated her worst fear. and that is her lesson for the day. we are all sent here to learn lessons, every moment of every day. and so it goes. these things are continually happening. lessons. brushes with death. life-affirming lovemaking. delusions of grandeur. humbling moments. all together.

5/10/25

shimdawg and the hens (an interview):

Zen Rose: What was your favorite part of the zoo?

it was the butterfly or bird exhibit or the red panda bridge

Aura Lavender: when we went to the butterfly exhibit and a little girl said whats your name and my favorite part was walking th red panda bridge and the bears fighting and the tiger walking. i liked climbing those rocks and getting dippin dots

Z: if you could be any animal, what would you be?

i'd be an eagle so i couldn't get eaten and i could fly away. no predators would hunt me. or a cheetah, cuz i would be so fast, or a flamingo, cuz they're pretty and pink

A: red panda because i'd wanna be climbing trees and hanging upside down

Z: when you go to bali, what will be the scariest part of traveling?

getting stuck on the plane

A: a tornado happening in the sky, or arriving to the new airport going through security

Z: when you get older, what kind of friends will you be friends with?

i'll be with kind ppl, and ppl that care about me, and ppl that are pretty, and ppl that are strong, and silly and fun and cool strong. strong, yeah. silly, cool, loyal, trustworthy, and then also brave & kind

A: loyal, trustworthy, kind, caring, brave, and different (unique), pretty, funny, and then the last one would be loving

A: what three words best describe your dad?

hilarious, kind, caring

Z: fun, silly, kind

A: how bout mom? kind, loving, caring

Z: loving, embarrassed, nice

A: and for patrick? hilarious, fun, very caring

Z: hilarious, fun, and very caring, cool

5/25/25

Scoobs died a couple days ago. Trying hard to fill the void in my heart. Zen and I are playing our first scrabble game EVER. She's doing great. Already shreds at chess. Aura being helpful. Life flows. All is flow. A sunny day after a chilly late may. Things changing.

5/27/25

Visitation tomorrow and funeral thursday. Not sure what to feel. Gonna go for a drive. Just watched a reel of Scoobers' baby pix and LOST IT. It comes in waves. Bri G. flying in today. Has been pretty noncommunicative. Everyone grieves differently. Gotta remember that. McGlone called me. A few close friends and family reached out. It means a lot. Not sure how to tell them. But it does. Kind of an overcast, strange feeling day. I left a bunch of vinyl and drum stuff and cymbals at Steve's. Not really sure if i'll ever have the guts to ask for it back. Boiling water for tea. A short meditation. Life is brief. A brief time.

6/2/25

After a week of grieving Scoobs, I exit the sad timeline a little. I grabbed a pair of his shoes, a ton of compact discs, and a couple tshirts. I played a show on 5/31,

good turnout and the best payout I've had for a wayob-sanctioned show. But I physically and spiritually wasn't there. Botched my set, ended it early, got butterflies, etc...I suppose they can't all on all the time. The girls and I hit Trader Joe's, we do the usual sunday routine. Only today is a mental health monday. A day off for them, a day off for me. A loaded bridge card helps. We're on our way to the lake soon to get sun and swim a little. I'm at a loss for words, but know I need to move my body today and every day. Tomorrow I'll get the girls to school early and drive my taxi around a bit. His pictures and laughs remain. I promised myself I'd make a list of what I remembered him by, so I don't forget at 60 or 70 or ever. It'll never be the same. He was, I'm coming to realize, my ONLY friend who really cared, was genuine and sweet- we could open up to each other in ways other cats don't. Girls playing school. I'm folding laundry. Life marches on, even after death. It's hard, though, because you want to stop life for a little bit. And just get that space. I'm learning to cultivate that space within. Practicing Tai Xi. Practicing stillness. Practicing compassion for all beings. Kayla is another best friend who opens up to me, and the last 400 days with her have been some of the happiest of my life! Really starting to seem like a soulmate. We're just gettin' warmed up!

